

FOREIGN DEPARTMENT

IN CHARGE OF
LAVINIA L. DOCK



LETTER

ALL travellers are sorely tempted to describe the places they have seen, and I am only restrained from pages of raving over Constantinople by the knowledge that it would sound flat and dull to those who have not been there, and those who have will know what a unique and unequalled spot of the earth it is, with the most brilliant of spring weather shining down on it.

And how near home it seemed when I found myself being "toted" by Miss Hart, a Bellevue nurse, and Dr. Ottley, a Johns Hopkins medical man! To them I am indebted for seeing hospitals. They got the permits and untwisted the manifold yards of red tape, and personally conducted me about. No such thing in Constantinople as going to the door of a hospital and announcing one's self as a Dottoresse or Krankenschwester from America and expecting to be taken about! In the first place, the distances are enormous; one must go to the ends of the car-lines and then drive a couple of hours to the outskirts of everything, and then pass the sentinel boxes of soldiers and the lodges of porters, and then go from pavilion to pavilion in large grounds, and all in a language which might just as well be Chinese.

It took the greater part of a day to go to the Greek hospital (all the different nations have their own hospitals, like their own post-offices, in Constantinople), and another whole day to visit the Royal Hospital for Children, and to drive to the old military barracks at Scutari, where Florence Nightingale's world-famous work was wrought. A week could easily be spent in hospitals in Constantinople. The French and German hospitals are, of course, managed according to the national customs, and excellently. The Greek hospital is very large, on spacious grounds, and has some new pavilions with small rooms that are modern, cheerful, and attractive, but some of the old wards, deficient in light and air and with the painfully unkempt appearance of old hospitals without trained nurses, were very forlorn, especially those that were filled with phthisis patients. The managers and physicians of this hospital are very desirous of establishing a modern system of nursing, and it would not be surprising to

see such a change effected before long. The Royal Hospital for Children, called the Hamidié (after the Sultan, Hamid), is the pride of Turkey, and well it may be. It was erected at the personal cost of the present Sultan, who also bears the whole expense of its support on a truly munificent scale. It is entirely free, and though a children's hospital has also provision for women, and when we were there several large pavilions were filled temporarily with wounded soldiers.

The Sultan is said to be the most humane ruler Turkey has had, and, indeed, his face (for we saw him drive to prayers), while old, tired, and sad, showed kindness, and one could easily imagine him taking an interest in charitable institutions. The Children's Hospital is his special interest, and it is said that he personally inspects every instrument and appliance that goes into it. Under his rule there has been a marked revival of medicine and hospital work in Turkey, and the Germans seem to have been called in everywhere to direct the movement towards modern reforms. The Children's Hospital has been built from the plans of German experts; its medical management is planned out and systematized according to the most thoroughgoing German science, and the nursing is entrusted to German sisters drawn from the "Diakome-Verein," which has been described in the *JOURNAL* as an association especially modern, free, and highly trained, and which seems to attract women of superior caliber.

The hospital is really so complete and perfect in all its details that there is no room for criticism anywhere. The grounds are extensive and well planted; the pavilions, of simple architectural lines, stand singly; every kind of service, including contagion, is provided for; scientific sterilization, the laboratories of all kinds, the X-rays and photography, the plumbing and drainage, the ventilation, the details of soiled linen removal and disinfection, the fittings for surgical technique, all are as faultless as any hospital has yet succeeded in making them. The wards are exceedingly pretty, tiled and painted in light colors, and the most immaculate cleanliness reigns supreme. The white linen gowns and caps of the nurses were as spick and span as a German military parade, and only one Oriental feature was present in the whole picture, and this the prettiest possible one. This was the dress of the Turkish (or native of some kind) women, ward assistants to the nurses. They wore gowns of native cut, of light colors and charming materials, and were most gracefully draped in large sheer white veils, which they wound around their heads and shoulders in an inimitable manner. All the women, and little girl patients, too, wore similar veils, not so large, but all carried out the idea of the covered head.

Several women patients in single rooms had brought their own



ENTRANCE TO THE GROUNDS OF THE HOSPITAL-HAMIDIÉ FOUNTAIN



CONVALESCENT CHILDREN

bedding and linen, and we could hardly sympathize with their ills for admiring the crimson-satin-covered mattresses, fine embroidered linens, and home-dyed and home-woven bedspreads, which were fit to adorn a museum, to say nothing of their little Turkish shoes, elaborate Parisian toilet cases, and innumerable perfumes.

The diets in this hospital are arranged in seven schedules according to medical requirements, but it is a matter of pride that no difference is made between rich and poor patients. The food varies according to the disease, but not according to the pocket-book of the patient, the poorest receiving the same delicate diet as the richest.

It was all so fascinating we could hardly tear ourselves away. Generous provision is also made for entertaining foreign medical men who come there. A most beautifully appointed little dining-room is theirs, with table always set, and in the visitors' book we saw the names of many American physicians and others from all over the world.

Dr. Nicholas Senn, of Chicago, has written an account of this hospital in which he says: "This hospital, the just pride of the Sultan and the local profession, has few, if any, equals of its kind in the world. It was built and is maintained at the private expense of the Sultan as a memorial to one of his favorite little daughters, who died. The outside world knows little of the work of civilization and deeds of charity of his Imperial Majesty, Abdul Hamid II." He says further: "No private hospital offers more comfort, better nursing, or more attentive and careful medical and surgical treatment, and yet it is a rule established by the royal donor that no money shall be taken from any of the patients. . . . At the Sultan's special request sixteen beds have been set aside for the treatment of foreign patients that might apply for relief to any of the legations. All that is necessary to secure admittance is to apply to any of the Ambassadors for a recommendation. . . . The question of religion is never raised in admitting patients. . . . At least thirty-three per cent. of all patients in a given year were Protestants."

Dr. Senn also mentions a practical detail, which Dr. Ottley pointed out to us, in the examination of patients. There is a large polyclinic, or, as we would say, dispensary, connected with the hospital, at which twenty-five thousand cases were treated and supplied with free drugs last year. Every one of these cases, before being sent on to the department where he or she belongs, is examined in a preliminary station for possible infection. This most practical precaution is *not* observed, I know, in many of our large dispensary services in the United States. The hospital has several wards for acute infections, and special receiving- and examining-rooms for the same.

We next made a pilgrimage across the water and the hills to the

Scutari side, to Haidar Pasha, where the military barracks stand. These enormous and forbidding-looking barracks were utilized as a hospital during the Crimean War, and it was here that Florence Nightingale came to take charge. It stands on a beautiful site overlooking the blue sea, and near by stands a mosque with its domes and minarets. The barracks are three-story, of vast extent, built around an inner square, and having at each corner towers which have a look not unlike that of the Madison Square Garden in New York.

Useless would it be to try to describe one's sensations in beholding this old hospital. To see, first, the quiet gardens surrounding the hospital wards at Kaiserswerth, and the tiny ivy-covered house where Miss Nightingale lived, and then to look at this huge mass of buildings standing in its conspicuous position, seen from afar in every direction, seems to give an epitome of her wonderful life and work—the life so unobtrusive, the work so spectacular. As it is now all military, we could not enter without many ministerial permits, which might, at any rate, not condescend to a humble mortal of the (in Turkey) inferior sex.

After leaving it we drove to a small leper colony. It cannot be called a hospital, as no medical treatment or supervision was given, nor was it under charge of anyone, but just a tiny village given for the refuge of lepers, whose relations are allowed, if they wish, to live with them. And, indeed, we found a healthy young woman living with her leper mother and a wife or two with husbands. Their little homes were of two or three rooms each, built barrack fashion around a small court. We went into one and it was quite cosy and comfortable, with a divan and a brazier and a rug for furniture. They had a common water-supply and the entrance to their little commune was through a large gateway. They were all comfortably dressed and seemed quite cheerful and uncomplaining (but then the Oriental never does complain). They must have friends who supply their needs. As we went out they clustered about the gateway, and we gave them the munificent sum of twenty cents (five piasters, but a piaster is as good as fifty cents to them), in gratitude for which they lifted their voices in unison in a sort of chant, the weirdest and strangest little song I ever heard, and this followed us until we were out of sight.

L. L. D.

PRACTICAL POINTS

At the London Hospital, with babies or very young children after operation, or in cases of low vitality, the cribs are made up with a large, square pad or flat cushion of rubber filled with warm water under the draw-sheet. The warm water is periodically renewed, thus maintaining continuous warmth without fear of burns.



FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE'S HOSPITAL AT SCUTARI

BABIES' cribs in Rome in the hospital in charge of Sisters of Charity have the sides made of soft, heavy, loosely twisted cotton rope, something like that seen on old-fashioned country window-shades, put together in a simple macramé pattern.

IN the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary one of the bathrooms of a gynæcological ward has a convenient arrangement for douching. A large douché-pail hung on the wall has a thermometer fixed in it, and by pressure on a foot-pedal a flow of hot and cold water into the pail can be produced and the temperature regulated to the exact point desired. Below the pail is arranged a wooden frame on which the patient reclines. It contains a circular opening with a receiving bowl below it connected with the waste-pipe. A rubber ring and pillow support the patient. This hospital also has little, ventilated closets for keeping specimens of excreta for the physicians. They are cut in the walls of the towers where the plumbing fixtures are placed, and cut right through to the air, protected outwardly by a grating and inwardly by a tight-fitting little door.

A CONVENIENT device noticed in the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary and the Royal South Hants and Southampton Hospital (doubtless also to be found in other hospitals) is a mechanical arrangement for cleansing bedpans. The device consists of a small water-pipe coil made in a shape which fits the bedpan. The coil is fixed in a deep slop-hopper, and is punctured with openings for the water, on the principle of a spray. A central opening sends up a strong, straight jet, the coils innumerable small jets. The bedpan is placed upside down on the fixture, and the water turned on either by a spigot or by a foot-pedal. The cleansing is instantaneous and perfect.

MISS MOLLETT has had made to order for supplies of carbolic, boric, bichloride, and other solutions earthenware demijohns with the name of the solutions burned in the front in the potteries. Hers are of Doulton ware, but could be made to order in any pottery. This does away with pasted labels.

Two quite opposite methods for the care of babies or very young patients after operation for hernia, noticed in English hospitals, are suggestive. The London Hospital uses the following plan: The little patient, dressed in woollen shirt and stockings, is held in position by a binder skilfully placed under the arms and attached to the sides of the crib, and by soft flannel bandages which hold the feet and are fastened at the crib's foot. No splints are used, but a sandbag at each side, covered with flannel and then encased in a pretty little linen slip, supports the position. The wound has been dressed quite thickly with gauze,

neatly covered in with rubber tissue, or, rather, a somewhat more durable tissue than the ordinary. The penis is then snugly encased in a wrapping of oiled silk, which forms a tube sufficiently long to enter a glass urinal, and this remains continually in position. The child is thus preserved from the possibility of wetting the dressing.

The Royal Hospital for Children in Edinburgh uses another method. Here the children are also dressed in warm little shirt and stockings, but are held in position by double side-splints with cross-piece at the foot. The wound is left entirely without dressings. Simply the sutures are protected by a thick sprinkling of boric acid powder, or whatever other powder the surgeon may use. The penis is left uncovered except for a sterilized soft towel. A cradle of proper size is lined with sterilized towelling and supports the bedclothes. The results are excellent.



ACUTE ARTICULAR RHEUMATISM.—The *Medical Record* in an abstract of an article in the *Deutsche Medicinal Zeitung* says: "Burwinkel, in discussing the present-day knowledge of this disease, says that the weight of evidence seems to favor the idea that acute articular rheumatism is a disease of the blood, in which the red cells are destroyed in large numbers and the fibrin content of the blood increased. As a result of this marked viscosity of the blood, hyperæmia and thrombosis in the capillaries of regions poorly supplied with vessels are likely to occur, with subsequent exudation. Statistics supplied by various authors, Burwinkel contends, show that the introduction of the salicylates cannot be viewed as a progressive step in the therapy of this disease, for not only are they accompanied by unpleasant after-effects, but there seems to have been an actual increase in the number of cases, with cardiac complications. The author's method of treatment comprises complete rest in bed until one week after absolute defervescence. The diet includes plenty of water, fruit, oatmeal soups, zwiebaek, milk, rice, and spinach, but no meat or meat-soups. Three or four times daily he gives the juice of one lemon, together with a teaspoonful of bicarbonate of sodium. Mild hydrotherapeutic measures are recommended. Thorough evacuations of the bowels are necessary. Great value is attached to bleeding, which may be done two or three times during the onset of the disease to the extent of one hundred and fifty to three hundred cubic centimetres (five to ten ounces)."